

**New Durham Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Workshop Meeting ~ September 28, 2015
Town Hall**

Members Present: David Bickford, David Swenson, Gregory Anthes

Others Present: Interim Town Administrator Carter Terenzini, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Carole Ingham, Baysider Reporter Mark Foynes, Mark D'Entremont, Ellen Phillips, Jen Nyman, Dot Veisel, Terry Jarvis, Michelle Kendrick, Joan Swenson, Tony Bonnano, Carolyn Sullivan, Mark Sullivan

Call to Order – Chair David Bickford called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Sale of Tax Deeded Properties @ 13 Birch Hill Road: The TA updated the Board on the inquiry that had been made about purchasing this parcel. There is obligation upon the Town to provide the former owner with certain notices if the Town wants to sell it within the three year right to repurchase period. In this case that will expire in March of 2016. He noted that many communities, due to various issues surrounding this notification process, do wait out the so-called holding period. There ensued a discussion of holding certain parcels for Conservation (or other purposes), the manner in which this objective can sometimes be met while still selling the parcel, the fact that every parcel kept off the tax rolls impacts the overall tax rate and how communities should convert a Tax Deeded property to "Town Property" via a vote of Town Meeting. Chairman Bickford spoke to the small size of a number of the parcels and the desire of people in the Copple Crown to not see these built out particularly given a number of them were on steep slopes. Ms. Ingham asked if it was the intent of the Board to ask Town Meeting to act upon the parcels it had discussed retaining as Conservation lands. There was no consensus to do so at this time. With respect to the Birch Hill property, the TA spoke to the advantages of taking all parcels to sale on a regular basis for transparency as opposed to acting individually upon inquiry. The consensus was to await the expiration of the three year holding period before proceeding. Mr. Swenson spoke to previous research and discussions on a number of the parcels which the TA and Ms. Ingham will be retrieving for future consideration.

Setting of TA Compensation Range & Process: The TA reviewed a memo on the research he had carried out on the salary ranges for TA's within our population range (2k to 5k). Primary sources were the NH Municipal Association survey of 2015 and several recent advertisements. Based upon "truing up" the figures to 2016 (for this 01/16 hire) he suggested a range of \$66k to \$76k. Chairman Bickford spoke to the survey being a report on ranges and not necessarily what people were being paid. He felt more comfortable in the area of \$60K. Mr. Swenson thanked the TA for the research and said he thought the recommended range (and the work upon which it was based) was not an unreasonable range and a fair first pass. Mr. Anthes said he felt the most important jobs for the Town were the TA and Finance Officer but that a \$100K (w/benefits) budget figure for the TA was huge for a Town of this size. There ensued a discussion amongst the Board as to the add on fringe benefit "Burden Rate" and whether or not the TA model currently advertised was the right model for the Town and whether or not the Board might be well served by more of an Executive Secretary/Executive Assistant model. There was no consensus to move toward such an approach.

After a lengthy discussion on how and when the salary range is set there was no consensus on a range. The BoS set interview dates of 10/14 and 10/15 from 10a to 2p. By a consensus of two (Bickford and Swenson), out of area candidates could be interviewed by Skype.

Review of Budget Committee Target in \$s: The TA spoke to the Budget Committee's target for the upcoming OPEX budget of \$2.8 million and whether or not it was the Board's intent to deliver a budget at that figure. He said he may have misunderstood and wants to revisit the issue of how the budget will be presented. Did they want a single bottom line proposal which presents a global view or did they want the departments to bring their budgets in one at a time. Mr. Bickford said he like it the way it is normally done (one at a time by the Departments). Mr. Anthes said he had a cut of \$300K as his target without any reduction of services. He asked how the TA would know this and what to present. The TA said the member could always share the information and then it could be considered during the review. Mr. Anthes said he was not comfortable with the TA being a "filter" between the Departments and the Board to which the TA responded that the Departments would still be coming in to make their case.

After a lengthy discussion there was a consensus of two (Bickford and Anthes) to deliver a budget to the Budget Committee at \$2.8 Million or less. A second consensus of two (Bickford and Swenson) developed for the TA to present a bottom line global view budget. That presentation to the BoS was set for 10/19 and the Budget Committee will be invited to this. The BoS will meet in budget reviews on 10/27, 28, and 29 from 1p to 5p.

On Other Discussion Matters: The TA said those could be held and he needed a non-public session to consider the hiring of a person as a public employee. **Motion by Mr. Bickford, Seconded by Mr. Anthes, to go into Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b). On a Roll-Call Vote, Bickford – Yes; Swenson – Yes; Anthes – Yes. The Motion passes.** The Board entered non-public at 9:07 p.m.

The Board re-entered Nonpublic session at 9:45 p.m. having sealed the minutes by a vote of 2/3 of the Board, or greater, as it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.

The Chair said the matters discussed had been the potential employment of two individuals.

Motion by Mr. Swenson, seconded by Mr. Anthes, to adjourn the BoS meeting; The Motion Carries.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carter Terenzini
Interim Town Administrator

A video recording of this meeting is on file with the Office of Town Clerk, is available for public viewing during normal business hours, and will be retained in accordance with the New Hampshire Municipal Records Board rules established under RSA 33-A:4, or for a minimum of 24 months.